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a finite grasp. This transcendent science is known only in the measureless profundities of the Infinite Reason, only in the clear vision of the Divine Consciousness itself.

The return of Plato, so plainly indicated in the tendencies of the time, will be hailed with joy by all generous souls. It is the renewal, in philosophy, of a Saturnian reign. The Platonic is of all human wisdom the best authenticated. It stands not only upon constant and primary logical necessities, but upon an ancient credit, which, while not always equally maintained, has not, at any time, been wholly lost. Consciousness and history thus give to it a double warrant. Proved by long and ardent conflict, it has come out of the fight at length victorious, with trophies won in service to truth and virtue. It now appears, under the determined and sincere advocacy of Cousin, to awaken a deeper earnestness in our yet meagre sentiment, and to vindicate, for an enslaved and misunderstood Philosophy, her rightful dignity and freedom. Such being its kindly errand, let us welcome, with grateful hearts, its instauration.

ART. V. — *Poem delivered at the Dedication of Crawford's Statue of Beethoven, at the Boston Music Hall, on Saturday Evening, March 1, 1856.* By WILLIAM W. STORY. Boston. 1856.

IF the politics of this country, as well foreign as domestic, do not fall into inextricable confusion,—if we can go on quietly for a few years, without a civil war, a separation of the States, or an exhausting contest with any other nation,—it is manifest to every person of common understanding, that a career of brilliancy in almost every department of human life is possible for us, and that our advance in what is commonly called civilization may be faster and farther than that of any other people. It is manifest that we are not likely to be favorites with any of the nationalities with which we claim kindred. If we had remained, for the most part, of homoge-

neous descent, it is very possible that we should have retained some place in the cool regard of those who represent our ancestry. But we have lost, by our rebellious temper, (which, by the way, was no unimportant part of our inheritance,) the good-will of our parent; and have not been fortunate enough to acquire any really very deep sympathy from any other people. The rest of the world look with astonishment, sometimes, at our free speaking, prompt action, and bold assumptions; and when particularly pleased with anything we may have done, they pat us on the back, tell us to be good boys, and we shall be able, by and by, to be and to do something worthy of the great European blood which flows in our veins. Perhaps we shall, — perhaps, too, the time will come when it will be the boast of a European nation that they can prove that some of their blood is in us, and shows itself in our character.

But it is not worth our while to boast in anticipation. It may, however, be excusable, if we refer to some of the grounds we have for hopefulness in the experience of the past; if we attempt to show that it is not all boasting on our side, but that we really have done some things, and that it is the doing of them, and not the mere talking about them, which makes us hopeful, and, if you please, confident and boastful. Of the mode in which we achieved our political independence nothing need be said, as the world has seen fit to acknowledge pretty generally that we were bold and persevering, as well as fortunate; but it is worth while to mention, that after achieving independence, we set men an example, in establishing a Constitution, the first written one on record, which has been feebly imitated, but never equalled, by other nations; something like which has been tried without success elsewhere, but which here grows stronger with time, and seems destined to last — some time longer.

This is a peculiarity worth remembering. Other men, other nations, have fought for freedom from foreign yokes, and have gained it; but where else is the people that has established a complicated system of political arrangements, powers, and duties, and has maintained it with success, under circumstances of increasing difficulty? Others have tried the operation,

like the Spanish colonies in South America; but with what results? Some of them are imperial governments, with as little resemblance to republican institutions as ever; and none of them have made any approach, in reality, to our constitutions and practices. If we had done nothing else, we might be pardoned, perhaps, for estimating ourselves as of some rank in the scale of nations.

If, in like manner, we have availed ourselves of our opportunities to attain results which are honorable in other departments of life, we should claim our position, and do ourselves justice. Many are ready to exclaim, that we do ourselves more than justice,—and it is very likely that injudicious people among us do; but let us try that hard task of doing simple justice,—nothing more, nothing less,—and see what will be the issue. If we can show honorable products in literature and art, and progress in many important regards, it may afford ground of hope that we shall go on, in still wider and more conspicuous fields, till we shall claim and receive the acknowledgments of others, which are gratifying because it is so difficult to obtain them. Without attempting to enumerate all those who have deserved well of their country, it will not be difficult to select names enough of men from our own vicinity, or who, at least, are well known here, to justify our pretension to stand respectably among the nations of the world; and if others will follow our example, and exhibit claims which are, or should be, recognized, we shall soon find the justice of the position to which we think we have a right, and receive acknowledgments, which, if ever given now, are given so grudgingly, and with such qualifications, that they excite no pleasure, but rather a strong sense of the unfairness of the critics, whether foreign or domestic.

While we have poets like Bryant, Longfellow, and Dana to appeal to, we need not fear to challenge the living literature of the world in that department. No, challenge is not the proper word,—we are content to take the place which will be assigned to us by the impartial judgment of mankind. In every quarter of the country there are names which have not yet attained the extended renown of these, but which, if they

were as widely known, would be highly prized. Such we have among us, and such are scattered in other places. At all events, we rejoice in one man of business, who, if he gave a little more time to poetry, would stand by the side of those we have named in the judgment of all, as he actually does in the estimate of those who judge of poetry for themselves, without requiring the major vote of all mankind. Need we name Sprague to any Bostonian as one who was born to be a poet, and who has been constrained to a profession which seems, by some strange destiny, to be associated with poetry in both hemispheres? What has money-dealing to do with song, that two of the best poets of the age, in the same language, but in different countries, should be members of that most prosaic of professions, and unsympathetic of occupations? Who ever before thought that the soul of a banker could be warmed by anything but profit, or could work up a horror out of anything but loss? Yet inspiration is irresistible, and both British and Americans will like each other the better for the charming productions of men who are poets by instinct and bankers by profession.

In prose composition of a high order we are not absolutely deficient. We have three scholars who have distinguished themselves by historical productions of eminent merit, and who are acknowledged, not merely by ourselves, but by the literary world, to take rank with the leading historians of the age; namely, Prescott, Sparks, and Bancroft.

In the glorious art of sculpture we have again three contemporaries, in whose powers and whose fame any country might justly feel a proud confidence, resting not upon assumed future success, but upon achieved renown. We refer to Crawford, Powers, and our own townsman, Greenough. We speak of the living, but let us not forget the dead. The success which was attained by the brother of Mr. Greenough may well stimulate him, and the fame of both will be an inheritance which their country, as well as their family, will fondly cherish. Sculpture is sometimes said to be the most difficult of the arts; and if we judge by the rarity of success in it during the entire history of the world, we shall suspect, at least, that the remark is just. Certain it is that it has flour-

ished only in the most brilliant periods of the world's history. It requires the combination of all the circumstances which contribute to success — leisure, wealth, and talent — to lead men to devote themselves, heart and soul, as they must, to so difficult and laborious a profession; and no one will do this unless the world around him is competent to judge, with some degree of fairness, of the merits of his labor. It is a power the mere appreciation of which requires thought, knowledge, sympathy; and when a man appeals to these mental affections, how small must be the number of those who can and will do him justice! It requires a self-reliance equal, almost, to Kepler's, to sustain one under the confident criticisms of ignorance, or the heedless blundering of pretension. He who gives himself up to the profession is no small part of a hero, as well as an artist, and the successful sculptors we have known have been, for the most part, men of robust powers, and strong characters, as well as brilliant imaginations. It is, we suppose, owing to the peculiar turn of the American mind, the bold, strenuous habit of action which shows itself so commonly in this country, that there are so many among us — females as well as males — who seek renown in this department of art. At all events, it implies devotion on one part, and appreciation on the other, to produce so many candidates for the honors of this profession; and we are ready for any theory which acknowledges the fact that there is devotion to this art, and that there is appreciation of it, here as well as in Europe.

In the art of painting, young as we are as a nation, we are at this moment compelled to refer rather to the past than the present. We have had, within half a century, three artists who would have done honor to any people or to any school, and whose names are not likely to be forgotten as long as their works endure. We must be very ambitious for artistic glory, if we are not satisfied with the reputation of Stewart in the department of portrait-painting, of Newton in that of a charming fancy, and a rich coloring of unsurpassed brilliancy and depth, and of Allston in every quality of poetic imagination, perfect drawing, and splendid coloring. In Allston was combined the power of beholding things as they are, with the

power of imagining things as they would be under certain given circumstances ; while he harmonized all with an atmosphere of which one really sees the effect, and gave to the tints and texture of the clouds the forms of nature, and to the thoughts their natural expression and their deepest meaning.

Having mentioned these leading names in poetry, history, sculpture, and painting, it is perhaps advisable to rely upon them, rather than increase their number, as we easily might, by calling to mind artists and authors who are, "if not first, in the very first rank." But we are not writing for the purpose of paying compliments, nor even of distributing exact justice among the parties who have striven to do honor to their country as well as to themselves. Enough that we have in reserve a multitude of names that could not be spoken without praise, in all the departments that have been mentioned, and in many others besides. The catalogue of writers, and good writers too, in every walk of literature, not merely in history and poetry, is immense. And so in the arts of sculpture and painting there are not a few who have striven well and risen high, though all cannot be highest.

We have some other arts to mention, which show American taste and perseverance, which few would have imagined it possible for us to have attempted, or even thought of, and in which the unequalled ambition and prolific invention of the American mind have stimulated us to great undertakings, and to great success. The casting of bronze may well be mentioned as an object of universal interest and of great ambition, in Europe as well as in this country, and certainly not undeserving of the estimation in which it is held. Modelling for it is an entirely distinct art from the cutting of marble, and implies a vast deal of knowledge of metals, forms, colors, and effects, which is quite different from anything necessary in the sculpture of marble. That we have our *bronzisti*, by no means inferior to the most celebrated European artists in metal, is an assertion which, though we are quite prepared to make it, others may not be prepared to believe. We can wait. The proofs will ere long be given to the world.

There is another art, essentially a poetic and beautiful one, (though its associations are not all with the sublime or the

picturesque,) in which we confessedly surpass the rest of the world at the present day. It is the art of ship-building, or rather that of building vessels; for it is not merely in ships that we are in advance of others, but in the building, the rigging, and the handling of every sort of craft that can use the winds and the waves as their playmates, their servants, or their friends. An American, especially a Yankee, never feels so completely at home as when he is in a cabin, or on a quarter-deck; and if it is a taste derived from birth or education, it must be owned that the child has been rogue enough to beat his mother. As a work of art, what is there on land or sea, in the firmament above or the firmament below, which suggests so many ideas of grace, power, convenience, luxury, and mutual service, as the beautiful clipper, pilot-boat, or yacht, which is to be found in our waters as its birthplace, but which wanders to every sea and every harbor of the globe? An American vessel is known all over the world by its beauty and its agility; and the art of building and sailing such fairy locomotives must be claimed as one of the finest of the arts of man.

It is not worth while, and it would be scarcely possible, to enumerate the inventions which show the imagination of Americans, from the axe which fells the tree to the reaping-machine which gathers the harvest. Every one of them betrays mind, talent, ingenuity, which, according to the early direction that is given to it by education or by accident, produces a poem, a statue, or a clipper ship. Everybody knows that the country is overrun with inventors. The patent-office has to increase its force of examiners, from time to time, because the race of inventors multiplies so fast; while there are thousands of contrivances produced that never seek the protection of the office. The peculiar arts of civilization are pushed forward with an energy and rapidity of which there has been no previous example; and as they are all the results of mind, it is difficult to perceive why they are not as truly evidences of civilization and progress, as the production of books. A good machine is certainly a better evidence of *mind* than a poor book, and there are a great many specimens of *machine literature* published in America every year. More than that, there

are a great many inventors of machinery whose whole souls are engrossed in their profession as completely as ever was that of the so-called scholar, or philosopher, or poet. It is curious to see how different kinds and classes of thinkers present to common observers similar phases and habits of mind; and there is many a student of the wonderful language, action, and results of machinery, who is as much wrapt up in his pursuit, and goes abroad as much abstracted in his own thoughts from all that is around him, as the philosopher of Syracuse, who rushed naked through the street in joy at his discovery of a new mathematical rule.

Mathematics and machinery are not usually enumerated among the fine arts, properly so called; but they require powers and habits of mind so nearly akin to those displayed in literature and philosophy, that it calls for no great effort to recognize their relationship. Extremes meet, and the lines and figures drawn by the scientific engineer often show the very curves which the artist calls lines of beauty, and the proportions which he loves to delineate. One can easily recollect works of scientific men, which, if they were not said and known to be profound, would be admired as works of art. And we have a school which every year sends out its graduates among us, well prepared for those achievements which may be either our defence in danger or our honor and ornament in security. Certainly our bridges over rivers and valleys, and from mountain to mountain, are among the finest specimens of *fine arts* which the world has to show.

"Well," we hear one exclaim, "what is all this glorification for? Don't we all know and feel and say, every day, that we are a great people, and that we are going to be greater, and that we are going to put the rest of the world to school?" We mean simply to prepare the way for other remarks of a different nature. If we have done respectably and commendably in some departments of life and art, there are others in which we are so lamentably deficient, in which we have so surely gone backward and not forward, that we have nothing to do but to lay our hands on our mouths, and our mouths in the dust, and confess our short-comings, even our backslidings, and at the same time our boastings,

with contrite humility. There is one art in which we have retrograded, and actually lost what our fathers and grandfathers knew and practised ; and it is one of the mysteries of our day and generation, that such things could have been done as have actually been perpetrated in every hamlet, village, town, and city through the whole length and breadth of the land. We refer to the buildings in which wood and brick and stone have been fastened together, sometimes in huge piles, and in every variety of figure which could enter the mind of man, except a comely one ; thus showing the world, that, with all our ambition, there are subjects upon which we are too ignorant to learn, and that, with all our resources, we know not how to use them. It increases the depressing power of the facts, to know that there was a period in the earlier history of these States — say about a century ago — when many examples were set, in every part of the country, of a style of architecture which gave promise of better things to come ; when manifestly there was a truer eye for proportion, and color, and position, than has since been shown ; and we must suffer the reproach, not merely of making no progress, but of actually going backward, and losing previous attainments. Before the Revolution, there were scattered — everywhere through the Colonies, we believe, certainly in every part of them which we have visited — buildings of various characters, public and private, dwelling-houses, churches, government-houses, which, without great expense, afforded evidence of the cultivated taste, and the eye for proportion, which are all that is necessary for the erection of pleasing structures. Many of these edifices were of wood, no very expensive material, and have lasted in perfect condition to our own time, as if to mock the pretensions of the architects of our day, who seldom produce anything of the sort, but show their skill by mixing up elaborate styles of different ages in the same edifice, or adapting, as they say, the structure to the necessities of the time ; which means, for instance, erecting the entire front of a building of glass, except a few columns to hold it together, or building a steeple on a roof, without any other foundation. The growth of population has nearly covered with small tenements the ground formerly

occupied by the stately mansions of the governors and merchants of former days; and there is only here and there a house or a church left from which our children may possibly derive an idea, if they should wake up to the deficiencies of our time. It is much to be feared, that the shops, houses, churches, and public buildings of every kind, will grow worse and worse, with the crowding of population and the increase of riches. This will certainly be the case, unless men of wealth and taste are found, who will take an interest in the subject, and put forth strenuous efforts for reform. In Downing we have lost an early and discerning friend of this rich art, who was contributing largely, and would have done more, for its progress among us. But others are left, and we do not despair of the future, though we have so little to boast in the recent past. It is a very curious anomaly in our national character, that architecture has not flourished among us as an art; for it deals largely with those externals, showiness in which is the very besetting sin of our race and nation. Expensive as it is, its costliness can scarcely be the reason of the slight regard in which it is held; for during the last hundred years fearful sums of money have been lost upon the unmeaning or hideous edifices which everywhere offend our eyes. The want of educated taste, if not the absolute want of discernment, must be acknowledged; but we will express the hope, that ere long our public will learn that the cheapest edifices may have fair proportions, which will cost as little as the monstrous abortions that now cumber the ground. We have architects among us, both native and foreign, who are abundantly competent to correct the faults and deficiencies abounding here, and who are longing for the opportunity to exhibit their talents and acquirements in their noble profession. Let them not lose courage. Better things will come.

Would that it were possible to feel as much consoling hope on the last topic to be discussed, — that we could discern any prospect that the existing generation will enjoy native productions in that finest of the fine arts, in which we are most entirely and most lamentably deficient as to culture, and even as to the natural power of discernment. If this people is ever to understand and love music, it can be only after the

lapse of some generations or centuries. What else could be expected where in some persons ignorance of an art, in others contempt for it, and in yet others conscientious scruples about the effect of it upon character, were all operating upon a people whose "bone was yet in the gristle," and who had been deterred by errors and misrepresentations from even learning what music is, and what are its legitimate effects? It may sound strangely at first, but it is an indisputable truth, that music, as an art, does not exist in this country; that is, among Americans. Who are your professors and proficient in any branch of the art? Germans and Italians. Scarcely an American knows how to blow a fife or to roll a drum. The ladies, to be sure, play the piano, but for the same reason, though by no means with the same enjoyment, that they dance the Polka. It is fashionable to know "a little something" about music; but as to playing for the natural, innate love of music, who ever heard of such a thing? Yet if everybody did it, and enjoyed it, we should still be greatly and lamentably deficient in this most fascinating of all arts, while we are unable to point to a single native author of eminence. There is something incongruous and queer in the combination of the words, — an American musician! An American musical writer! We know there is such a thing. We have heard of an opera or two written by Americans, and we know one or two Americans who compose *secundum artem*. But when shall we have a school? When shall we have musicians who shall be as much distinguished in their profession as Longfellow, Bryant, and Prescott are among the writers, or as Allston and Crawford among the artists, of all ages? It is almost too wild for a dream. And yet there are symptoms of a change. The love of the art is increasing, together with the respect paid to it; and fashion, frivolity itself, is slowly preparing the way for a feeling which must pervade the public before the highest results will be produced. We are beginning to be discriminating in our taste, and though our range is not yet very wide, our judgment is really better than could have been supposed possible. This rather shows the adaptation of the art to human nature, than the cultivation of our nature in the art; but, at all events, it proves

susceptibility, and out of that any degree of proficiency may come. We are hopeful, even of the progress of music, among us; and if we do go into it with the ambition and efficiency with which we have pursued the other arts, we shall one day, and that perhaps no distant day, have our own Mozarts, Beethovens, and Rossinis, and enjoy their music with the same proud and luxurious feeling with which we now boast of our patriots, statesmen, painters, poets, and sculptors.

We are not ambitious of having our countrymen spend their lives upon the practice of an instrument, and acquire a certain degree of skill upon it, while they remain ignorant of everything else, as we have seen, with regret and disgust, is often the case with European professors. There is something better than skill upon the violin or piano, attained by years of toil, and by the sacrifice of every other idea and feeling. Let the practice of the art be left to those who have the original, natural inclination to it. There will one day be a sufficient supply of such native artists, if they are allowed to follow their inclinations, and are not deterred from it by the contempt of the community. It is a strange thing to say, that the public *despise* one of the most profound as well as most delightful studies that can exist. But it is unfortunately true. They do not know how much science, what extensive knowledge, both of men and things, and what skill in many arts, are necessary to enable a man to succeed as a composer of music. It is not with that as with some other things that can be patronized and promoted by individuals. It requires the support of the whole public, at least their appreciation and sympathy. It rarely happens that an individual can order a musical composition, and if one did, it could be only for the gratification of the public. Who is magnificent enough to order a symphony, as he would a picture, for his own private use? This is one of the arts especially adapted to our country, where the public is everything, and the individual very little except as he constitutes a single atom of the great mass; and we live in the hope that the day will come when there will be sufficient appreciation of the divine art among us, to render it possible for men of genius to devote themselves to it with confidence and with zeal. Having witnessed

within our own time wonderful progress in things both useful and ornamental, we feel a conviction that there will still be progress in other things, — in all things that are desirable and necessary to a people, especially to one so separated as we are from others. If we were immediately surrounded, as each nation of Europe is, by kindred nations advanced and advancing together, some in one branch of attainment and some in another, there would be a tolerable certainty of progress in all. As it is, we must, of necessity, find the impulse for every improvement within ourselves, and perhaps the rest of the world will have a little consideration for us on this ground, and will not laugh at us more than we can bear, because we do not quite come up to our own standard. We should despair of our progress, if we had not a mark beyond our present attainment. And here is our great discouragement in respect to the arts in which we have confessed our deficiencies. We fear that there is not a sufficient perception of our wants to stimulate improvement. Yet, as we have intimated, we will not despair. There are symptoms, faint to be sure, of future progress, and we have seen so many and so great improvements in the half-century which we count as our term of life, that we cannot find a place for the word *despair* in our vocabulary.

ART. VI. — *History of the Reign of Philip the Second, King of Spain.* By WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT. Vols. I. and II. Boston : Phillips, Sampson, & Co. 1856. 8vo. pp. 618, 610.

UPON the appearance of these volumes, we were led to defer an extended notice of them, because we were told — on insufficient authority as it seems — that the remaining volumes were to be issued at a very early date. But, apprised of our error, and regretting that we became aware of it too late to retrieve it in our last number, we are unwilling to postpone any longer an expression of the pleasure with which, in common with the universal press on both sides of